

## Tireless Patient Advocate for California's Stem Cell Agency to be Honored at World Stem Cell Summit

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**January 17, 2018, Oakland, CA** – The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), the state's Stem Cell Agency, proudly announces that Adrienne Shapiro, a tireless advocate for sickle cell disease and CIRM, will receive a 2018 Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Action Award from the Regenerative Medicine Foundation (RMF).

Ms. Shapiro and five other honorees, including former Vice President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden, will be recognized on January 23<sup>rd</sup> during the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual World Stem Cell Summit (WSCS) which takes place in Miami, Florida from January 22-26<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

The Summit, organized by the RMF, brings together the full gamut of stakeholders in the regenerative medicine field, including researchers, patient advocates, investors and industry leaders. Approximately 1,000 attendees from over 30 countries are expected. This year, the WSCS will be co-located with Phacilitate's Cell and Gene Therapy World, the industry's premier partnering event.

Over the past 13 years, the Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Action Award has celebrated the field's top innovators, leaders, and champions. Ms. Shapiro is certainly a deserving honoree. The fourth generation of mothers in her family to have children born with sickle cell disease, Ms. Shapiro was an early advocate of innovative stem cell and gene therapy work by UCLA scientist Dr. Don Kohn. This research has led to an on-going, CIRM-funded clinical trial for sickle cell disease. Ms. Shapiro is the patient advocate representative on a Clinical Advisory Panel (CAP) that CIRM is creating to help guide this clinical trial. She offers advice on how to best design the trial to meet the needs of this patient population, something that could be vital in helping recruit patients for the trial.

As Founder and Science Administrator of the Axis Advocacy website and as an ambassador for the Americans for Cures Foundation, Shapiro has become a vocal stem cell activist, speaking to various groups about the importance of CIRM's investments in both early stage research and clinical trials.

"Advocates like Adrienne not only inspire the work we do but also play a critical role in the direction of CIRM-funded therapy development as members of our Clinical Advisory Panels. I look forward to applauding Adrienne when she receives her award," said Dr. Maria T. Millan, MD, CIRM's President and CEO. "I am also excited to be a scheduled speaker during the Summit and to share the Agency's tremendous progress toward our mission to accelerate stem cell treatments for patients with unmet medical needs."

In addition to presentations and panel discussions by Dr. Millan and other members of the CIRM Team, several CIRM-funded researchers are also among the 100+ distinguished list of speakers at this year's WSCS. The exchange of ideas that occur during these sessions is key to moving the stem cell field forward. As Dr. Anthony Atala, Director of the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine, states, "The World Stem Cell Summit is a critical and must-attend event. The Summit unites the global regenerative medicine community by bringing together researchers, clinicians, industry, financiers, regulators, philanthropists, media, patients and their advocates to understand the what's 'here and now' with an overarching goal to positively shape the future of this promising new era of medicine."

### About CIRM

At CIRM, we never forget that we were created by the people of California to accelerate stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs, and act with a sense of urgency to succeed in that mission.

To meet this challenge, our team of highly trained and experienced professionals actively partners with both academia and industry in a hands-on, entrepreneurial environment to fast track the development of today's most promising stem cell technologies.

With \$3 billion in funding and approximately 300 active stem cell programs in our portfolio, CIRM is the world's largest institution dedicated to helping people by bringing the future of cellular medicine closer to reality.

For more information go to [www.cirm.ca.gov](http://www.cirm.ca.gov)

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